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Statistical Abstract of the United States 1998

The National Data Book

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Preface

The Statistical Abstract of the United States, published since 1878, is the standard summary of statistics on the social, political, and economic organization of the United States. It is designed to serve as a convenient volume for statistical reference and as a guide to other statistical publications and sources. The latter function is served by the introductory text to each section, the source note appearing below each table, and Appendix I, which comprises the Guide to Sources of Statistics, the Guide to State Statistical Abstracts, and the Guide to Foreign Statistical Abstracts.

This volume includes a selection of data from many statistical publications, both government and private. Publications cited as sources usually contain additional statistical detail and more comprehensive discussions of definitions and concepts than can be presented here. Data not available in publications issued by the contributing agency but obtained from unpublished records are identified in the source notes as "unpublished data." More information on the subjects covered in the tables so noted may generally be obtained from the source.

Except as indicated, figures are for the United States as presently constituted. Although emphasis in the Statistical Abstract is primarily given to national data, many tables present data for regions and individual states and a smaller number for metropolitan areas and cities. Appendix II, Metropolitan Area Concepts and Components, presents explanatory text, a complete current listing and population data for metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), the primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs), and the consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs) defined as of June 1998. Table 43 in Section 1 presents selected population characteristics for MSAs with population of 250,000 or more. Statistics for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and for outlying areas of the United States are included in many state tables and are supplemented by information in section

29. Additional information for states, cities, counties, metropolitan areas, and other small units, as well as more historical data, are available in various supplements to the *Abstract* (see inside back cover).

Changes in this edition—This year we have introduced 93 new tables covering a wide range of subject matter. Several based on the National Survey of Family Growth, covering issues of fertility, family planning, and women's health, can be found in Sections 2. Vital Statistics, and 3. Health. Other new tables cover such topics as grandchildren living with their grandparents, persons with disabilities, health insurance coverage, ambulatory surgery, educational attainment by state. school violence, household use of public libraries, public library use of the Internet. toxic chemical releases, leisure activity, participation in NCAA sports and high school athletic programs, voter registration, licensed child care centers, foster, care, persons with home-based businesses, employee benefits, bank fees and services, home equity debt, use of debit credit cards, alcohol related fatal accidents, computer shipments, and foreign stock market indices. See Appendix V, pp. 964 for a complete list of new tables.

Statistics in this edition are generally for the most recent year or period available by spring 1998. Each year almost 1,500 tables and charts are reviewed and evaluated; new tables and charts of current interest are added, continuing series are updated, and less timely data are condensed or eliminated. Text notes and appendices are revised as appropriate.

USA Statistics in Brief, a pocket-size pamphlet highlighting many statistical series in the Abstract, is available separately. Single copies can be obtained free from U.S. Bureau of the Census, Customer Services, Washington, DC 20233 (telephone 301-457-4100).

Statistical Abstract on other media-

The *Abstract* is available in its entirety on the Internet and, an enhanced version,

on CD-ROM (except for a few copyrighted tables deleted by the request of source organizations). Our Internet site, http://www.census.gov/statab/www, contains this 1998 edition and earlier editions of the book, as well as summary items—Statistics in Brief, Frequently Requested Tables, and State Rankings, which will be updated as time allows. State and County Profiles is also on the site

The CD-ROM version of the *Abstract* has been enriched with links from tables to the Internet sites of appropriate government agencies. In addition, links are provided to the underlying spreadsheets (both .wk1 and .xls) from which the data in the tables are based. Ordering information for the CD-ROM is located in the inside back cover.

Statistics for states and metropolitan areas—Extensive data for the states and metropolitan areas of the United States can be found in the State and Metropolitan Area Data Book 1997-98. It features 859 data items covering everything from age and agriculture to wages and welfare for the 50 states and the District of Columbia with the United States totals for comparison. Also included are over 150 data items for metropolitan areas (MAs), 43 items for component counties of MAs, and 3 population items for central cities of MAs.

This publication, as well as selected rankings of the states and metropolitan areas, is available on our Internet site at http://www.census.gov/statab/www/smadb.html. Some data items that appear in the book from private sources are not available on the Internet or CD-ROM versions because we did not receive

copyright permission to release the data items in these formats. The CD-ROM version also includes links from the data tables to spreadsheets (both .wk1 and .xls) with the data and pertinent geographic information, to contributing government agency Internet sites, and to related source notes and explanations. See the inside back cover for ordering information.

Statistical reliability and responsibility—The contents of this volume were taken from many sources. All data from either censuses and surveys or from administrative records are subject to error arising from a number of factors: Sampling variability (for statistics based on samples), reporting errors in the data for individual units, incomplete coverage, nonresponse, imputations, and processing error. (See also Appendix III, pp. 945-960.) The Bureau of the Census cannot accept the responsibility for the accuracy or limitations of the data presented here, other than those for which it collects. The responsibility for selection of the material and for proper presentation, however, rests with the Bureau.

For additional information on data presented—Please consult the source publications available in local libraries or write to the agency indicated in the source notes. Write to the Bureau of the Census only if it is cited as the source.

Suggestions and comments—Users of the Statistical Abstract and its supplements (see inside back cover) are urged to make their data needs known for consideration in planning future editions. Suggestions and comments for improving coverage and presentation of data should be sent to the Director, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233.